April 9, 1990

Docket Nos. 50-387
and 50-388

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Mr. Harold W. Keiser
Senior Vice President-Nuclear
Pennsylvania Power and Light Company
2 North Ninth Street
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18101

Dear Mr. Keiser:

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSES AND PROPOSED NO SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS CONSIDERATION DETERMINATION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR HEARING (TAC NOS. 76371 AND 76372)

RE: SUSQUEHANNA STEAM ELECTRIC STATION, UNIT NOS. 1 AND 2

The Commission has requested the Office of the Federal Register to publish the enclosed "Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendments to Facility Operating Licenses and Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination and Opportunity for Hearing." This notice relates to your application for amendments dated March 16, 1990, as revised April 2, 1990, which would change the Technical Specifications by eliminating the quick loading requirements of the diesel generators during monthly testing, and by incorporating certain footnotes that allow the diesel generators to be prelubed and prewarmed prior to surveillance testing. Additionally, load testing requirements have been modified to include a load range rather than a specific load, and editorial changes are proposed for the purpose of achieving clarity.

Sincerely,

/s/

Walter R. Butler, Director
Project Directorate I-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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cc w/enclosure:
See next page

[76371/2 EXIGENT]

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

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and 50-388

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Senior Vice President-Nuclear
Pennsylvania Power and Light Company
2 North Ninth Street
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Walter R. Butler

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Project Directorate I-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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cc w/enclosure:
See next page

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

PENNSYLVANIA POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY

DOCKET NOS. 50-387 AND 50-388

NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSES AND PROPOSED NO SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS CONSIDERATION DETERMINATION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR HEARING

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of amendments to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-14 and NPF-22, issued to Pennsylvania Power and Light Company (the licensee), for operation of the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station, Units 1 and 2 located in Salem Township, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

The amendments would change the Technical Specifications by eliminating the quick loading requirements of the diesel generators during monthly testing, and incorporating certain footnotes that allow the diesel generators to be prelubed and prewarmed prior to surveillance testing. Additionally, the amendments would modify the load testing requirements of the diesel generators by including a load range rather than a specific load, and would make editorial changes for the purpose of achieving clarity.

During September and October of 1989, Susquehanna Steam Electric Station (SSES) experienced two diesel generator crankcase explosions. To address the safety concerns associated with those events, the licensee established a task force to investigate the root causes(s) of the events and recommend corrective actions. After extensive studies and discussions with the manufacturer of the diesel generators and the NRC staff, the licensee concluded that the crankcase explosions at SSES were probably caused by several unique factors which

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included the severity of testing procedures required by the Technical Specifications. This conclusion was presented to the staff in a meeting on February 28, 1990. The staff agreed with the licensee's proposals and urged the licensee to submit appropriate changes to the Technical Specifications in an expeditious manner. By a letter dated March 16, 1990, as revised by a letter dated April 2, 1990, the licensee submitted its request for changes to the Technical Specifications on an exigent basis. The staff agreed with the licensee's bases for processing the application on an exigent basis, because an improvement in safety was involved and because immediate action was needed to prevent subsequent testing of the diesel generator in accordance with the existing Technical specifications requirements that were found to be potential contributors to the crankcase explosions.

Before issuance of the proposed license amendments, the Commission will have made findings required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act) and the Commission's regulations.

The Commission has made a proposed determination that the amendment requests involve no significant hazards consideration. Under the Commission's regulations in 10 CFR 50.92, this means that operation of the facility in accordance with the proposed amendments would not (1) involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated; or (2) create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated; or (3) involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

The Commission's staff has reviewed the following bases and conclusions provided by the licensee to address the above provisions of 10 CFR 50.92.

The proposed changes do not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated. The diesel generators are not addressed in the accident analyses other than in a design basis assumption which is that shutdown of the units during an accident must be accomplished utilizing three diesels. The proposed changes will enhance diesel reliability and availability thereby reducing the probability of a common mode failure which ensures the validity of the accident analysis assumptions. Although the proposed testing reduces the conservatism in the Tech Specs by modifying the load requirements, previous testing, and the fact that the new load ranges envelope worst case accident loads, provide assurance that the diesels will perform their intended function and therefore will not significantly increase the consequences of accidents previously evaluated.

The proposed changes do not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any previously evaluated. As noted above, the accident analyses consider a diesel generator failure as a single failure. The proposed changes do not create any new testing methods, and the existing test requirements are being modified to decrease the probability of a common mode failure. Therefore, the proposed changes do not create the possibility of a new or different event.

The proposed changes do not involve a reduction in the margin of safety. The revised testing requirements will reduce the current levels of stress and wear on the engines, thereby reducing the potential for premature diesel failures. Test results to date provide clear evidence that the diesel generators are capable of handling the currently described worst case conditions. This, combined with the proposed testing which provides continued assurance that the worst case accident loads will be enveloped, results in no significant decrease in the margin of safety.

The staff finds the licensee's bases and conclusions to be acceptable. Accordingly, the Commission proposes to determine that these changes involve a no significant hazards consideration.

The Commission is seeking public comments on this proposed determination. Any comments received within 15 days after the date of publication of this notice will be considered in making any final determination. The Commission will not normally make a final determination unless it receives a request for a hearing.

Written comments may be submitted by mail to the Regulatory Publications Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, and should cite the publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. Written comments may also be delivered to Room P-223, Phillips Building, 7920 Norfolk Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Copies of written comments received may be examined at the NRC Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW, Washington, D.C. The filing of requests for hearing and petitions for leave to intervene is discussed below.

By May 16, 1990 , the licensee may file a request for a hearing with respect to issuance of the amendments to the subject facility operating license and any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding and who wishes to participate as a party in the proceeding must file a written request for hearing and a petition for leave to intervene. Requests for a hearing and petitions for leave to intervene shall be filed in accordance with the Commission's "Rule of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings" in 10 CFR Part 2. Interested persons should consult a current copy of 10 CFR 2.714 which is available at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20555 and at the Local Public Document Room located at Osterhout Free Library, Reference Department, 71 South Franklin Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18701.

If a request for a hearing or petition for leave to intervene is filed by the above date, the Commission or an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, designated by the Commission or by the Chairman of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, will rule on the request and/or petition; and the Secretary or the designated Atomic Safety and Licensing Board will issue a notice of hearing or an appropriate order.

As required by 10 CFR 2.714, a petition for leave to intervene shall set forth with particularity the interest of the petitioner in the proceeding, and how that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding. The petition should specifically explain the reasons why intervention should be permitted with particular reference to the following factors: (1) the nature of the petitioner's right under the Act to be made a party to the proceeding; (2) the nature and extent of the petitioner's property, financial, or other interest in the proceeding; and (3) the possible effect of any order which may be entered in the proceeding on the petitioner's interest. The petition should also identify the specific aspect(s) of the subject matter of the proceeding as to which petitioner wishes to intervene. Any person who has filed a petition for leave to intervene or who has been admitted as a party may amend the petition without requesting leave of the Board up to fifteen (15) days prior to the first pre-hearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, but such an amended petition must satisfy the specificity requirements described above.

Not later than fifteen (15) days prior to the first prehearing conference scheduled in the proceeding, a petitioner shall file a supplement to the petition to intervene which must include a list of the contentions which are sought to be litigated in the matter. Each contention must consist of a specific statement of the issue of law or fact to be raised or controverted. In addition, the petitioner shall provide a brief explanation of the bases of the contention and a concise statement of the alleged facts or expert opinion which support the contention and on which the petitioner intends to rely in proving the contention at the hearing. The petitioner must also provide references to those specific sources and documents of which the petitioner is

aware and on which the petitioner intends to rely to establish those facts or expert opinion. Petitioner must provide sufficient information to show that a genuine dispute exists with the applicant on a material issue of law or fact. Contentions shall be limited to matters within the scope of the amendments under consideration. The contention must be one which, if proven, would entitle the petitioner to relief. A petitioner who fails to file such a supplement which satisfies these requirements with respect to at least one contention will not be permitted to participate as a party.

Those permitted to intervene become parties to the proceeding, subject to any limitations in the order granting leave to intervene, and have the opportunity to participate fully in the conduct of the hearing, including the opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses.

If the amendment is issued before the expiration of 30-days, the Commission will make a final determination on the issue of no significant hazards considerations. If a hearing is requested, the final determination will serve to decide when the hearing is held.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration, the Commission may issue the amendment and make it effective, notwithstanding the request for a hearing. Any hearing held would take place after issuance of the amendment.

If the final determination is that the amendment request involves significant hazards consideration, any hearing held would take place before the issuance of any amendment.

Normally, the Commission will not issue the amendment until the expiration of the 15-day notice period. However, should circumstances change during the

notice period, such that failure to act in a timely way would result, for example, in derating or shutdown of the facility, the Commission may issue the license amendment before the expiration of the 15-day notice period, provided that its final determination is that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration. The final determination will consider all public and State comments received. Should the Commission take this action, it will publish a notice of issuance. The Commission expects that the need to take this action will occur very infrequently.

A request for a hearing or a petition for leave to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, Attention: Docketing and Service Branch, or may be delivered to the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., by the above date. Where petitions are filed during the last ten (10) days of the notice period, it is requested that the petitioner promptly so inform the Commission by a toll-free telephone call to Western Union at 1-(800) 325-6000 (in Missouri 1-(800) 342-6700). The Western Union operator should be given Datagram Identification Number 3737 and the following message addressed to Walter R. Butler, Director, Project Directorate I-2, Division of Reactor Projects I/II: petitioner's name and telephone number; date petition was mailed; plant name; and publication date and page number of this FEDERAL REGISTER notice. A copy of the petition should also be sent to the Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, and to Jay Silberg, Esquire, Shaw, Pittman, Potts and Trowbridge, 2300 N Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, attorney for the licensee.

Nontimely filings of petitions for leave to intervene, amended petitions, supplemental petitions and/or requests for hearing will not be entertained absent a determination by the Commission, the presiding officer or the presiding Atomic Safety and Licensing Board that the petition and/or request should be granted based upon a balancing of the factors specified in 10 CFR 2.714(a)(1)(i)-(v) and 2.714(d).

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated March 16, 1990, as revised April 2, 1990, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20555, and at the Local Public Document Room, Osterhout Free Library, Reference Department, 71 South Franklin Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18701.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 9th day of April 1990.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Walter R. Butler, Director
Project Directorate I-2
Division of Reactor Projects I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation